

then some services when we have costs going up for the School for the Blind because I think potentially they've had reductions. There has been bills, and they are doing research for the School for the Deaf. We're mainstreaming some of those individuals, keeping them in the schools with the students. That research, I think, is very vital, but I'm real concerned about continuing or expanding this at this time because I don't think we've fully explored the potential of partnership with what is out there already in terms of the School for the Blind, utilizing some of the...maybe the people, the staff, to help educate teachers instead of starting again a duplicate system in the Department of Education and responsibility. I feel it could come down to where it's a mandate, potentially unfunded, for schools to try to put in. I don't know if teachers now can take on another responsibility. What I see potentially here is adding additional teachers to do this teaching in terms of for the blind. So I ask you seriously consider not supporting this at this time. And I would hope Senator Schimek and the Education Committee would look into a possible partnership with the School for the Blind that is there, and finding a way for them to work in the partnership with teachers and the students that are in some of the schools and do the training that way. So I would oppose this at this time. Thank you.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Senator Janssen.

SENATOR JANSSEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and members of the body. Yeah, I would...I would argue that this is...that it's a mandate. It is not a mandate. It is not a mandate, and what would happen if you have a child in your district that has started at, say, two or three years old learning braille, and it's time for them to go to school, and they come to the school and there is no equipment there or anyone qualified to help that child through it? The argument is, I guess, that you can send them to the School for the Visually Impaired. But what would happen if the parents of that child contested that and said, I want my child to go to school with his friends, or her friends. How would that stand up in a court of law? I'm afraid that. I'm afraid you could probably lose that, and there you would be with a mandate, with a mandate on that school, and it is going to end up costing that school district some money. So I just, you know, if someone else would like to pick up on this, I just want you to be aware of what could happen, and those local school districts could be...could be in a big jam, and I